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Art Unit 3733

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PROPOSED CLAIMS

Cancel existing claims and replace with the following claims:

1. (Amended) A bone fixation device for retaining cervical vertebra of a spinal column in a desired spatial relationship, comprising:

a first member connectable to a first vertebra;

a second member connectable to a second vertebra and interconnected with the first member, wherein the first and second members are movable relative to one another across a range of motion;

an adjustor member that transitions between a first state wherein the adjustor member is fixed relative to the first member and movable relative to the second member, and a second state wherein the adjustor member is fixed relative to the second member and movable relative to the first member, wherein the range of motion between the first member and second member spans a first, limited distance when the adjustor member is in the first state, and wherein the range of motion between the first member and second member spans a second, limited distance when the adjustor member is in the second state.

2. The device of claim 1, wherein the range of motion enables compression and subsidence of the vertebra.

3. The device of claim 1 wherein each of the members has a projection portion and a receiving channel for complementary placement of the projection portion of one member into the receiving channel of another member.

4. The device of claim 1, wherein the first member has at least one

projection portion and the second member has at least one receiving channel to receive the projection portion of first member.

5. The device of claim 4, wherein the projection portion has a generally elongated body with cross-section shape selected from the shapes of a triangle, truncated triangle, rectangle, modified rectangle, and a trapezoid.

6. The device of claim 1 wherein the adjustor member comprises an elongated element and a plurality of fasteners for selectively fixing to the first and second members.

7. The device of claim 1 wherein the first and second members each has at least one opening to accommodate a bone screw for securing the first and second members onto the vertebrae.

8. The device of claim 1, wherein at least a portion of the device is constructed of a biologically adaptable or biologically compatible material.

9. The device of claim 1, wherein each of the first and second members has curved surfaces to conform to the surface contours of the vertebrae.

10. A device as in claim 1, wherein the first distance is less than the second distance.

11. A device as in claim 1, wherein the range of motion is linear.

12. A device as in claim 1, wherein the first member includes a distraction screw coupler that permits the first member or the first vertebra to be coupled to a distraction screw while the first member is connected to the first

vertebra.

13. A device as in claim 1, wherein the distraction screw coupler comprises a borehole sized to receive therethrough a distraction screw.

14. A device as in claim 13, wherein at least a portion of the borehole can mate with a portion of the distraction screw.

15. A device as in claim 1, wherein the first member includes a modular coupler that can mate with a second bone fixation device.

16. A device as in claim 1, wherein the range of motion is curved.